

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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NESCO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AORG, OCON, UNESCO
SUBJECT: UNESCO: 20TH GENERAL CONFERENCE: LEBLANC'S
CANDIDACY FOR THE PRESIDENCY

1. ACCORDING TO ONE POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION OF THE PAST PATTERN OF ELECTING PRESIDENTS OF THE UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCES, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 20TH SESSION (OCTOBER 24-NOVEMBER 28, 1978) IT WILL BE WESTERN EUROPE'S TURN.
2. FOR SOME FIVE MONTHS, THE CANADIANS HAVE BEEN ADVANCING THE CANDIDACY OF M. NAPOLEON LEBLANC, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE CANADIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO, AND FORMER EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER.

3. RUMORS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING THAT THE ARABS ARE PLANNING TO MAKE A GRAB FOR THE PRESIDENCY ON THE GROUNDS THAT NO ARAB HAS YET HAD THE POSITION, AND, IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ANY EVENT, THE WESTERN EUROPEANS WILL GET A NUMBER OF LESSER HONORS AT THE 20TH.

4. IN THE FACE OF THIS THREAT, DR. ALWIN WESTERHOF, THE AUSTRIAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO UNESCO AND CHAIRMAN OF ELECTORAL GROUP ONE, (MAINLY WESTERN EUROPEANS), CALLED A MEETING OF THE GROUP ON MAY 8, AND

SAID THAT THE GROUP WOULD HAVE TO MOVE FAST TO ANNOUNCE
A CANDIDATE, OR IT WOULD LOSE OUT TO THE ARABS.

5. NO OTHER MEMBER OF THE GROUP CAME FORTH WITH A
COMPETING CANDIDATE, AND LEBLANC WAS APPROVED BY
CONSENSUS AS THE GROUP'S CANDIDATE.

6. LEBLANC IS WIDELY REGARDED AS A CHARMING GENTLE-
MAN, BUT MANY OBSERVERS HAVE EXPRESSED SERIOUS DOUBTS
THAT HE IS SUFFICIENTLY SKILLED AND EXPERIENCED AS A
CHAIRMAN TO HANDLE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A UNESCO
GENERAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT.
TORRES

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